

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

48-05

7/18/05

NATIONWIDE RAW GROUND BEEF COMPONENT MICROBIOLOGICAL BASELINE DATA COLLECTION PROGRAM

NOTE: This notice only applies to inspection program personnel at the establishments that are included as part of the baseline data collection program.

I. PURPOSE

This notice provides information to inspection program personnel at establishments participating in FSIS' Nationwide Microbiological Baseline Data Collection Program for Domestic Beef Trimmings. Information in this notice applies only to the 90-day training period before the study begins. Also included with this notice is a Computer Based Training (CBT) disc for use by inspection program personnel.

II. BACKGROUND

A. This baseline study will consist of samples from beef trimmings that are to be available for the production of raw ground beef. The program will be conducted at about 250 establishments that slaughter and fabricate carcasses into trim available for use in ground beef production. This beef trimmings baseline study **will not include** head meat, organ meat, or Advanced Meat Recovery product (these may be included in a separate baseline program), nor trimmings that are predominantly fat and are most likely destined for such products as finely textured beef or partially defatted chopped beef. The term "beef trimmings" includes trimmings from subprimal cuts such as boneless chuck or parts of boneless chuck that are frequently used as components of raw ground beef.

B. Before the baseline program begins, FSIS will conduct a 90-day training period. The purpose of the 90-day training period, as addressed in this notice, is to ensure that inspection program personnel are familiar with the new sample collection procedures. During the training period, products will be tested for *Salmonella*, generic *Escherichia coli*, *Enterobacteriaceae*, total coliforms, and aerobic plate counts (APC). FSIS will not test for any pathogens of public health concern that would render the product

DISTRIBUTION: Establishments
Included in Baseline Study,
OFO/OAA; OPHS Directors; TSC

NOTICE EXPIRES: 8/1/06

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adulterated as defined by the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA). After the training period is completed, the baseline study will continue for a minimum of twelve months and the results will be published as the official baseline report. Inspection program personnel will receive sampling forms and supplies for each requested sample. During testing under the baseline study, samples will be tested for *E. coli* O157:H7, and if the samples test positive for *E. coli* O157:H7, all product represented by the sample will be considered adulterated. More information about sampling after conclusion of the training period will be covered in a separate FSIS Notice.

III. BREAKDOWN OF THE 90-DAY TRAINING PERIOD

A. During the **first 30 days** of the training period, inspection program personnel will collect samples as shown in the CBT. For this training period and the baseline study, the sample collection method in the CBT supercedes the sample collection instruction in FSIS Directive 10,010.1. One sample should consist of 60 pieces from the surface of beef trimmings and the surface should be the carcass surface, wherever possible. This sample is only to be sent to the contracted laboratory as designated in the CBT training materials.

B. During the **next 60 days** of the training sampling period, inspection program personnel will collect 120 surface pieces and alternately fill two sample collection whirl-pak bags as described in the training disc. One set of the 60 surface pieces should be sent as a sample to the designated FSIS laboratory. The other set of 60 pieces should be sent as a sample to the contracted laboratory (see CBT training material).

C. If the establishment is testing all the lots of trimmings available for use in raw ground beef for *E. coli* O157:H7, the sample should not be collected until the establishment has received a negative test result.

D. Samples should be collected and shipped on the same day. If operating procedures do not permit this, an explanation should be sent to the new electronic mailbox in Outlook for "Baseline Study Questions" and further instructions will be provided.

IV. REVIEW OF TRAINING MATERIALS BY INSPECTION PROGRAM PERSONNEL

Upon receipt of the notice, inspection program personnel that will be collecting the samples are to take the training on the provided CBT disc. If FSIS personnel have questions concerning the training material or the sampling procedures, they may send those questions to the Baseline Study Questions mailbox or may contact the Technical Service Center (TSC).

V. INITIAL AWARENESS MEETING WITH PLANT MANAGEMENT

A. After taking the training on the CBT disc, the Inspector-in-Charge (IIC) should have an awareness meeting with plant management to inform them that the establishment will be part of the national baseline study and to explain the program.

B. The IIC should emphasize that during the training period, FSIS will **not** be testing for pathogenic organisms that would render the product adulterated. However, the IIC should inform the establishment that when the baseline study begins, product will be tested for pathogens and that the establishment will be responsible for identifying the product represented by the sample (i.e., sampled lot). Discussions should include consideration of product represented by a sample, commingling of products and source materials used in the production of trimmings available for grinding from domestic trim and trim produced from primal and subprimal parts of beef. At a minimum, the discussion should encompass the following:

1. determination of lot size,
2. impact of lot definition on actions required in the event of a positive *E. coli* O157:H7 test result,
3. affected product implicated by the selected sample,
4. in-house controls and microbiological testing concerning organisms of public health concern, and
5. actions expected by both the establishment and FSIS personnel in the event an adulterant is found.

NOTE: Inspection program personnel and the establishment should read and become familiar with this notice, as well as FSIS Directive 10,010.1, Rev. 1 and the Questions and Answers on FSIS Directives 10,010.1, Revision 1, 5000.2, and 6420.2 relative to defining lots of affected products based upon microbiological testing under the baseline study, and the amount of notification time prior to sample collection that inspection program personnel should provide the establishment.

C. Participants in, and all matters discussed between FSIS personnel and the establishment during the awareness meeting should be documented on a memorandum of interview and placed in the inspection files.

Inspection related questions (e.g., questions about sampled lots) should be directed to the Technical Service Center at 1-800-233-3935.



Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy, Program, and Employee Development